

Fecture

RADIO TV REPORTS INFO 2005/06/06 : CIA-RDP74B00415R000400100011-1

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FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM NBC Nightly News

STATION WRC TV  
NBC Network

DATE December 15, 1971

CITY Washington, D.C.

RICHARD FECTEAU HOLDS NEWS CONFERENCE

JOHN CHANCELLOR: Richard Fecteau was freed last Sunday by the Chinese after 19 years in prison, much of that time in solitary confinement. Today he emerged from his room in a military hospital in Pennsylvania and held a news conference.

REPORTER: Fecteau refused comment on questions that implied he was a spy, but otherwise he was most agreeable and in good spirits. Doctors say his health is normal. He said he feels all right and he thinks President Nixon's China trip is a good thing.

He answered questions for 12 minutes, even though he finds conversation difficult because of the nine years he spent in solitary confinement.

REPORTER: Did you get a trial at all?

RICHARD FECTEAU: Yes, I did, yes.

REPORTER: What kind of trial was it? Did you have a lawyer?

FECTEAU: I did have a lawyer, yes.

REPORTER: Why did you smile, Mr. Fecteau?

FECTEAU: Well, he made one statement during the trial. He said something about -- I had been educated in the schools of America. Therefore, I knew nothing. He would make very short statements, so there was no point in having a lawyer (very difficult to understand).

REPORTER: How long did it take them to get a verdict?

FECTEAU: One day. One hour.

REPORTER: What was your day like there? How did you spend a day? Day after day.

Approved For Release 2005/06/06 : CIA-RDP74B00415R000400100011-1

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FECTEAU: Reading, working in the show (unintelligible).

REPORTER: Did you say, "walking in the building?"

FECTEAU: Walking?

REPORTER: Walking. Did you think of it like an American prison?

FECTEAU: No, because there are no bars.

REPORTER: No bars?

FECTEAU: No bars. A door with a peekhole in it for looking through, that's covered. And the window is covered half-way up, so you can't look out the window.

REPORTER: Was there any point at which you gave up hope of getting out.

FECTEAU: I never gave up hope, no.